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LETTER DATED 17 JANUARY 1991 FROM THE CHARGE D'AFFAIRES A.I. OF THE PERMANENT MISSION OF ALGERIA TO THE UNITED NATIONS ADDRESSED TO THE SECRETARY-GENERAL

I have the honour to transmit to you herewith the text of a statement issued on 17 January 1991 by the spokesman of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of the People's Democratic Republic of Algeria. I should be grateful if you would have this letter and its annex circulated as a document of the Security Council.

(Signed) Amar BENDJAMA
Chargé d'affaires a.i.

Annex

Statement issued on 17 January 1991 by the official spokesman of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of Algeria

Since 2 August 1990, the Arab nation has been confronted with a critical situation and one of the most dangerous in all its history. The tragedy reached its climax with the massive military intervention against fraternal Iraq carried out by an international alliance led by the greatest of the Western military powers. In order to carry out this operation against a third-world country, the greatest mobilization of means of destruction in the history of warfare was carried out in Arab territory over a period of only five months.

This war is an expression of intransigence, of a sense of power and of a desire for hegemony. True power, however, is that which is bestowed by God, and He requires of those upon whom he has conferred it that they should be wise and just. The conceit and sense of power of the parties concerned have left no room for flexibility and compromise. This is also true with respect to the righting of the greatest wrong committed in this century, namely that to which the heroic Palestinian people fell victim more than 40 years ago. This war which has been imposed on the fraternal Iraqi people has been forcefully rejected by Algeria in the past, and it condemns it today in the strongest possible terms.

The destiny of the Arab nation has never before been threatened in the tragic manner in which it is being threatened today.

Motivated by an awareness of the painful consequences that would stem from such a war and mindful of the great dangers that threaten the unity and destiny of the Arab nation, Algeria, together with those vital Arab forces that grasp the higher interest of the Arab nation in achieving a peaceful solution within an Arab framework, has striven for the full mobilization of the Arab nation's lively conscience and its deep awareness of its interests with a view to achieving an Arab solution within an Arab framework.

Algeria has spared no effort to appeal to all those States with which it has relations and to all men of good-will in the world to strive for more understanding and greater flexibility in the search for a solution that will ensure the higher interests of the Arab nation and, at the same time, achieve world peace. Such a solution would be based, on the one hand, on respect for the international rule of law and the restoration of the sovereignty of Kuwait and, on the other, on the preservation of Iraq, whose achievements and capabilities represent a precious acquisition for the Arabs as a whole.

Algeria has acted out of a conviction that this war, aimed as it is at the destruction of Iraq, will necessarily affect Kuwait and other Arab countries, that it will inevitably have an impact on the entire Arab world and that it will benefit only the enemies of the Arab nation, principally a Zionist entity that can only emerge from the war strengthened.

Since 2 August last, Algeria has constantly affirmed that the Gulf crisis, no matter how recondite and complex its underlying causes and regardless of its grave regional and international consequences, could have been resolved justly and honourably within an Arab framework by means of dialogue and negotiations.

However, the Cairo summit convened on 10 August 1990, at which the Arabs assembled in order to seek an Arab solution precluding direct or indirect foreign intervention, supplanted joint Arab action by resort to foreign forces and thus opened the way to intransigence, a hardening of positions and an irrational yielding to the logic of war.

Algeria has constantly rejected the logic of war. It has always been aware of the devastating impact of an armed conflict, of the instability and insecurity that the Arab world, and indeed the world as a whole, would undergo as a result of the political and economic upheavals that it would cause and of the sense of wrong and humiliation that it would produce in the Arab nation.

The Arab world, which will be afflicted with unprecedented destruction and division, will be the first victim of the end of the cold war and of the new international political order intended to be established on the woes of the Arab world.

The Palestinian cause, that sacred Arab cause which is present in the current conflict just as it is present in all crises which convulse the Middle East, is once more a victim of the interests of power and of a disregard of the international rule of law to which appeal is made by those who bear responsibility for the war.

Algeria has always been against the resort to violence and the forcible annexation of territory, and these are firmly established and deeply held principles that have constantly guided Algeria in its foreign policy.

Algeria further believes that international legitimacy is an indivisible whole, and this means that international legitimacy is to be applied to one and all, in all circumstances and in all places, beginning with the question of Palestine.

Algeria, which strove assiduously up to the last moment in order to avert a catastrophe, charges one and all with their responsibilities towards the Arab peoples and towards history.

The Arab nation is facing the gravest trial of its modern history, and the Algerian people must endure that trial with its well-known courage and determination and in the spirit of responsibility and solidarity with which it is graced.

Closer than ever to the fraternal Iraqi people, Algeria expresses its solidarity with that people in the ordeal that has been imposed upon it. It calls upon all peoples that cherish peace and justice to strive earnestly for an immediate halt to military operations, for the withdrawal of all foreign forces and

fleets from Iraq, from Kuwait and from the entire region, and for an immediate start to be made on a process leading to the peaceful settlement of the Middle East issue through the convening of an international conference.

At this crucial stage in the history of the Arab nation, Algeria commits itself to exerting every effort for the mobilization and utilization of all such forces as may bring about a return to a state of lasting peace and stability in the region.